



News Release

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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Release 2001-18

STATE MOVES TO BAN NEW, REQUIRE CLOSURE OF OLD LARGE CESSPOOLS, MOTOR VEHICLE WASTE DISPOSAL WELLS

For Immediate Release
Boise, Idaho - Feb. 23, 2001

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State resource protection managers have prepared rule changes that would ban the creation of new large capacity cesspools and motor vehicle waste disposal wells and require existing ones to be properly abandoned in an effort to protect Idaho's groundwater, the Idaho Department of Water Resources announced today.

These types of waste disposal systems have a high potential for contaminating underground drinking water supplies and were banned last year by the Environmental Protection Agency. The IDWR injection well rule changes are being handled on an emergency basis to bring the state into line with the Federal guidelines, IDWR officials said. The changes will go before the Idaho Water Resource Board for adoption at the Board's March 23 meeting in Boise.

Existing large capacity cesspools would have to be properly abandoned by April of 2005. Currently used or existing motor vehicle waste disposal wells would have to be properly abandoned by January 2007.

IDWR knows the large capacity cesspools or vehicle waste disposal wells do exist around the state. Injection well officials do not know how many there are of each kind but believe there are not that many.

Multiple dwelling residential complexes such as a duplex or apartment building typically use large capacity cesspools. Other large capacity cesspools are sometimes used by such facilities as rest stops, restaurants or churches.

The motor vehicle waste disposal wells generally are found at service stations, auto body repair shops and auto dealerships. They can also be found at automotive specialty repair facilities such as transmission, brake and muffler repair shops, fire stations, county or municipal garages or any facility that performs vehicle repair work.

For more information, contact Mike Piechowski at (208) 327-7956. The proposed rule changes also are on the IDWR internet web site: www.idwr.state.id.us/info/Rulemaking/Rulemaking.htm.